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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. In its presidential statement of 27 May 1999, the Security Council requested that I submit periodic reports on the situation in Somalia. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. The report covers the period since my last report (S/2000/1211), issued on 19 December 2000. It includes an account of political developments and an assessment of the security situation in and relating to Somalia. It also presents an overall picture of the humanitarian situation and the humanitarian assistance activities of United Nations agencies and their partners, as well as my observations regarding the possibility of establishing a United Nations post-conflict peace-building presence in Somalia.

II. Political developments

A. Internal political situation

3. In the period under review, the Transitional National Government (TNG), led by President Abdikassim Salad Hassan, has brought on board two of the five faction leaders based in Mogadishu, originally opposed to it. In December 2000, Hussein Haji Bod reached an agreement with the TNG, and in February 2001, Mohamed Qanyare Afrah joined the TNG as Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources. Another faction leader, Osman Hassan Ali "Atto", has held several positive discussions with the President and provided the TNG with technical assistance in the recent "Clean-up of Mogadishu" campaign. The other two faction leaders in Mogadishu — Hussein Mohamed Farah Aidid and Musse Sudi "Yallahow" — continue to challenge the authority of the TNG.

4. In the early part of 2001, the TNG negotiated with the militias holding the Mogadishu seaport, but it remains closed because some faction leaders who control areas near the seaport, particularly Musse Sudi "Yallahow", have not agreed to its reopening. The TNG also sent delegations to various parts of Somalia for talks with clan leaders. While they met with some success in Hiran region, TNG delegations were ambushed by opposition militia in Gedo and Bakool. TNG claimed that the attacks were carried out with the backing of Ethiopia. The allegations were dismissed as baseless by Ethiopia.

5. On 18 June, the Chairman of the Lower Juba Alliance announced that an 11-member inter-clan council had been established in Kismayo and allied itself with the TNG. Following the failed attempts of General Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan" to retake the city in August, negotiations are ongoing to broaden and reaffirm the control of the council.

6. Other faction leaders who attended the Somalia National Peace Conference in Arta, Djibouti, including General Omar Haji Mohamed "Masale" of the Somali National Front (SNF), Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigudud" of the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA) and Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail of the Southern Somali National Movement-Biennal Resistance Movement (SSNM-BIREM), subsequently joined the ranks of those opposed to the TNG (see para. 13 below). Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed of "Puntland" denied reports that the TNG had been in direct contact with him.

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7. On 6 May, the TNG announced the appointment of the 25-member National Commission for Reconciliation and Property Settlement (NCRPS), as provided for in article 30 of the Transitional National Charter (TNC) adopted at the Arta Conference. NCRPS was to be chaired by Abdirizak Haji Hussein, a respected former Prime Minister of Somalia. NCRPS was immediately denounced by TNG opponents in the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) and the "Puntland" administration. On 25 July, Abdirizak Haji Hussein stated that he had sent a letter of resignation to the Prime Minister of the TNG. He felt that he had not received the support of the Prime Minister and objected to the procedure adopted by the TNG in appointing members of NCRPS and in announcing its establishment.

8. No government infrastructure, such as a civil service, has existed in Somalia for more than a decade. The TNG inherited no personnel, buildings, archives, forces of law and order or tax-collecting capacity. Ministries are beginning to function and a number of buildings have been rehabilitated for their use. A judiciary is gradually coming into place, with Sharia courts and their militia being absorbed by the TNG. Personnel are gradually being put in place to take charge of a police system in the capital and police have returned to all 14 district police stations in Mogadishu under a command structure. The TNG claims that the lack of resources makes it impossible, for the time being, to introduce similar law and order arrangements in other parts of Somalia.

9. The second session of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) that began on 20 February approved several TNG appointments, including those of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Somalia, the Attorney General and ministers. The TNA has ratified the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Arab League Charter and debated different activities of the TNG. The third session, which began on 17 September, will consider pending questions, such as local administration and taxation.

10. A group including faction leaders who stayed away from the Arta conference and others who participated but later denounced it, excluding the three Hawiye opposition faction leaders from Mogadishu, gathered in El-Berde (on the Somalia-Ethiopia border) in mid-January and announced they had reached a number of agreements that would result in the reconstitution of Somalia. They stated that they would reconvene in Baidoa 45 days later, but such a meeting has not taken place.

11. From early March, the Mogadishu faction leaders and the leaders who had met in El-Berde gathered in Addis Ababa and subsequently convened in Awasa, Ethiopia. On 13 March, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) was informed by Ethiopian officials that the objective of the meeting was to agree on a common platform to facilitate discussions with the TNG. Ethiopia denied that there was a plan for the establishment of a parallel government.

12. TNG leaders, including both the President and the Prime Minister, as well as the Speaker of the TNA, told my Representative during his visit to Mogadishu in March that they saw the meeting in Awasa as part of an Ethiopian plan to undermine the TNG. In a letter dated 21 March 2001 to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/263), the Prime Minister requested the Council to consider measures that would prevent "Ethiopian intervention" in Somalia's internal affairs. Ethiopia rejected the accusations in a letter dated 4 April 2001 (S/2001/325) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

13. At a press conference in Addis Ababa on 23 March, the Somali leaders who had met in Awasa announced the formation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC). They stated that its aim would be to hold an "all-inclusive national reconciliation conference within six months to form a representative Transitional Government of National Unity". SRRC informed my Representative during his visit to Baidoa on 8 September that the conference was postponed and would now be convened late in 2002.

14. While some of the Rahanwein people and former RRA leaders continued to participate in the TNG and TNA, others, including the RRA Chairman, have continued to reject TNG overtures. In late March, a number of Digil and Mirifle elders were imprisoned by the RRA leadership. Additional arrests were made in September of clan elders returning from discussions in Mogadishu. According to RRA, the effort by these elders to reconcile RRA with the TNG was unacceptable to RRA leadership since they had no mandate from RRA. Internal divisions within the RRA Executive Committee over calls for a new leadership congress were also reported.

15. On 23 July, the Chairman of SRRC wrote to me about the situation in Somalia. He stated that SRRC was "deeply committed to a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Somalia through dialogue and genuine reconciliation, which can enable all parties to reach a satisfactory political solution acceptable to all as outlined in the SRRC's Charter and Political Programme". He reaffirmed this commitment to my Representative in Baidoa in September.

16. On 13 March, my Representative held discussions with Mohamed Ibrahim Egal and members of his administration in Hargeisa, "Somaliland". This was after the local press had reported, on 21 January, that the authorities in "Somaliland" would no longer welcome my Representative, accusing him of supporting the Arta process and "distortion of Somali reality". However, Mr. Egal told him that the "Somaliland" administration had taken no such decision. He clarified that such press accounts might have been based on a non-binding resolution of the "Somaliland" legislature. Mr. Egal maintained that "Somaliland" had separated from the rest of Somalia and was not concerned about developments in the rest of the country. Nevertheless, Mr. Egal said that he was prepared to offer his services to help the "south", if necessary, as a Somali elder.

17. On 12 April, the "Somaliland" administration destroyed a large consignment of cigarettes allegedly belonging to a prominent Djibouti businessman. In an apparent reaction, the Djibouti Government announced on 17 April that it had closed its border with "Somaliland". Since then, there have been no air, land or sea communications between Djibouti and "Somaliland". In July, in an attempt to improve relations between the two sides, Mr. Egal announced the appointment of a committee of elders with the aim of sending them to Djibouti. However, the border remains closed.

18. On 31 May, the "Somaliland" administration carried out a referendum on a new constitution. The first article of the constitution asserted the independence of "Somaliland", while other articles made new provisions for political parties and elections. The "Puntland" administration, as well as the TNG, opposed the referendum on the grounds that it violated the Act of Union of 1960.

19. Although the referendum was peaceful, it was largely avoided by the international community. There was no electoral register but the estimated number of voters was put at 1.3 million and officials claimed that 97 per cent of the voters endorsed the constitution. In a post-referendum press interview, Mr. Egal called on the international community to recognize "Somaliland". The Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Salim A. Salim, said in a press interview a week before the referendum that OAU could not support any action that would affect the unity and sovereignty of Somalia.

20. In early July, Mr. Egal announced the formation of a new political party in "Somaliland", the Allied People's Democratic Party (UDUB), in preparation for parliamentary and presidential elections expected in 2002. A senior official of Mr. Egal's administration was elected Secretary-General. On 18 July, following a five-day meeting in Buroa, some elders concluded that UDUB was unconstitutional and called for its disbandment, but another larger group of elders refuted the allegation. On the same day, several members of parliament tabled a motion in parliament to impeach Mr. Egal on allegations of financial mismanagement and high treason, claiming that he had failed to pursue secession effectively. The motion was rejected in August.

21. On 13 March, Mr. Egal asked my Representative and the United Nations resident coordinator for Somalia to institute an inquiry into what he alleged was genocide carried out in parts of "Somaliland" by the former Barre regime during the Somali civil war in the late 1980s. He referred in particular to the need for a formal investigation into the mass graves that were discovered in Hargeisa and which appeared to date from that period. He said that he wanted to avoid the development of a "culture of impunity" with respect to the atrocities carried out against the people of "Somaliland" during the Somali civil war.

22. In her report of 26 January 2000 on the situation of human rights in Somalia (E/CN.4/2000/110), the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights noted the importance of efforts to preserve the evidence of mass graves in Hargeisa "in the context of possible action by the international community to bring the perpetrators of the killings to justice". The Special Rapporteur noted what she called the "serious human rights crisis" in central and southern Somalia, particularly in Mogadishu and Kismayo. She concluded that "much of what is happening in these areas amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity". The RRA

leader has also called for an investigation into the atrocities committed against his people by the forces of the late General Aideed after the fall of the Barre regime.

23. Under the Transitional Charter of "Puntland", approved on 30 June 1998, the mandate of the "Puntland" administration expired on 30 June 2001. Rather than undertake presidential and parliamentary elections as stipulated in that Charter, the administration of "Puntland", citing the unfavourable situation in Somalia, sought a three-year extension of its term. A group of traditional elders referred the decision on the extension to the House of Representatives, which following a majority vote extended the terms of office of itself and the executive for three years on 27 June. The Chairman of the Supreme Court declared the extension unconstitutional. He announced that, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, he had assumed office as the legal interim "President of Puntland", pending the organization of a "community conference" within one month, as stipulated in the Transitional Charter.

24. Colonel Yusuf suspended the Chairman of the Supreme Court from office on 29 June and the House of Representatives ratified the decision on the following day. However, the Chairman maintained that the announcements of his removal were ultra vires and hence null and void. His position was upheld by a meeting of titled elders which concluded on 25 July. Colonel Yusuf argued that a decision of elders could not overturn a decision of the House of Representatives.

25. Following unsuccessful attempts by elders and businessmen to promote a peaceful solution to the constitutional crisis, fighting broke out in Bosasso on 6 August and Colonel Yusuf retreated to his hometown, Galkaiyo. The Chairman of the Supreme Court stated that he had no political ambitions himself and that he would organize a community meeting, as provided for in the Charter, to set the future course of "Puntland". The conference was officially opened in Garowe, on 26 August, with over 400 participants representing all five regions and is still in session. Meanwhile, Colonel Yusuf announced on 12 August that he remained President of "Puntland", claiming that Galkaiyo was the interim capital and blaming "fundamentalists" and the TNG for his difficulties. He has also publicly declared the conference in Garowe to be illegal and refused to participate.

26. The relative peace in the central regions of Bay, Bakool, Hiran, Galgadud and Mudug has continued. However, internal rifts within SNF in Gedo region occasionally resulted in fighting within the Marehan clan. In Belet-Hawa district, intra-Marehan fighting on 31 March led to the death of 30 persons and the movement of an estimated 10,000 persons into Kenya's border town of Mandera as refugees. A local peace accord was negotiated on 4 June, with the assistance of Ethiopia and Kenya according to some reports. The refugees began returning to Belet-Hawa on 7 June.

B. Regional and other peace initiatives

27. The League of Arab States at a summit meeting in Amman on 26 and 27 March 2001, adopted a resolution in which it called on "all factions and sections of the Somali people" to "work to their utmost with the elected President and his Government to bring about security and stability, to safeguard Somalia's territorial integrity and to bring about the country's rehabilitation and reconstruction." It called for funding of US$ 54 million to be made available for the absorption and resettlement of militias and the restoration of State institutions.

28. In early April, President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan, current Chairman of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), announced the appointment of Ambassador Ali A. Nimeri as his Special Envoy for Somalia. The appointment renewed expectations that the IGAD mechanism for the peace process in Somalia, agreed on at the IGAD summit in Khartoum in November 2000, would be put in place. Initially, the TNG rejected the appointment of the Special Envoy on the grounds that it had not been consulted about it in advance, but the problem was resolved. President Omar al-Bashir informed the thirty-seventh summit of OAU, held in Lusaka from 2 to 7 July 2001, of his intention to have his Special Envoy consult with all parties to the conflict in Somalia on the way forward. Sudan's Foreign Minister wrote to my Representative informing him that Sudan planned to convene a national reconciliation conference in the near future following an agreement reached at the OAU summit between Sudan, Djibouti and Ethiopia. The Special Envoy began consultations in Mogadishu at the end of July and also travelled to some countries in the region.

29. President Hassan paid an official visit to Kenya on 16 and 17 May. He asked President Moi to assist in bringing the leaders who did not attend the Arta meeting into the peace process as well as in mediating between Ethiopia and Somalia. President Moi invited the SRRC leaders to Nairobi and offered the assistance of Kenya in bringing them into dialogue with the TNG at a meeting he held with them on 25 May. President Moi informed me that he intended to hold a meeting with Somali leaders in early July, before the OAU Summit in Lusaka. However, it is my understanding that Ethiopia requested and Kenya consented to a delay in the convening of this meeting in Kenya.

30. Relations between Ethiopia and Somalia improved as a result of the visit of a TNG delegation led by the Deputy Prime Minister to Addis Ababa from 13 to 16 June. The two sides agreed to Ethiopia's offer to foster the peace process within the framework of the subcommittee of IGAD. The TNG Foreign Minister was reported as saying that some of the accusations that had been made by the TNG against Ethiopia were "exaggerated".

31. Ethiopian officials have since held meetings with some SRRC leaders in Addis Ababa as well. The Ethiopian Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs went to Garowe on 19 June to confer with Colonel Yusuf. A follow-up visit by Ethiopian officials to Mogadishu was scheduled for the end of June but has yet to take place.

32. Despite a number of encouraging developments, however, the improvement in relations between the TNG and Ethiopia did not last. In early August, senior officials of the TNG accused Ethiopia of actively supporting the war efforts of General Mohamed Said Hersi "Morgan" and RRA in southern Somalia. Ethiopia denied these accusations. On 7 August, the TNG Minister of Information alleged that Ethiopian troops were entering Somali territory. On 14 August, the Foreign Minister of the TNG further alleged that an Ethiopian military officer was directing Ethiopian operations inside Somalia from Baidoa.

33. The TNG participated in the thirty-seventh summit of OAU in Lusaka. The OAU Council of Ministers, in its decision CM/Dec. 594 [LXXIV], reiterated, inter alia, the OAU commitment to the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Somalia; called on the TNG to intensify efforts to build upon the outcome of the Arta process; supported the efforts aimed at the establishment of the NCRPS; and reaffirmed that a lasting solution to the conflict in Somalia could be found only through dialogue and the involvement of all the parties in a spirit of mutual accommodation and tolerance. The Council of Ministers also commended those political forces in Somalia that had agreed to engage in this process without preconditions, and strongly condemned the warlords who persisted in their stubbornness in blocking the peace efforts in Somalia. Finally, OAU requested its Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the regional organizations concerned, to continue to support the TNG in its efforts to sustain reconciliation and reconstruction in Somalia. Subsequently, the OAU Secretary-General announced his intention to field a mission to consult with all parties to the conflict in Somalia.

34. I used the opportunity of my presence at the OAU summit to meet President Hassan and encouraged him to make further efforts towards the completion of the Arta process. I also understand that President Hassan and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi held talks in Lusaka.

35. A number of European missions visited Somalia for consultations with all leaders. They included missions from Norway and Italy as well as a European Union (EU) "troika" made up of Sweden, Belgium and the European Commission. The Government of Switzerland has been sponsoring a series of technical-level meetings between a Swiss constitutional lawyer and Somali officials. They have been considering options, based on the Menu of Options published by the European Commission in 1995, for decentralized political structures for Somalia as envisaged in the TNC.

36. Following the outbreak of fighting in Mogadishu, Lower Shabelle, "Puntland" and other parts of Somalia, the Presidency of the EU issued a statement on 10 August (see S/2001/792), calling on all parties to "exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid further bloodshed". It called on the TNG to pursue efforts towards national reconciliation, and welcomed the creation of the NCRPS. It also insisted "that all States should refrain from any military intervention in the internal affairs of Somalia" so as not to jeopardize "the sovereignty, political independence and unity of Somalia". The EU urged IGAD and its Member States to enhance their efforts aimed at encouraging the reconciliation process in Somalia.

37. The Sudanese Ministry of External Relations issued a statement on 14 August expressing similar regret at events in Lower Juba region, Kismayo and "Puntland". It called on all Somali groups to commit themselves to dialogue and abstain from fighting. It also stressed the Sudan's commitment to exerting further efforts to coordinate with other countries of the region to achieve reconciliation in accordance with the decision of the eighth IGAD summit, held in Khartoum on 23 and 24 November 2000.

38. My Representative continues to meet, as security circumstances allow, with all parties in Somalia. In March, he visited Hargeisa and Mogadishu and met a high-level SRRC delegation in Nairobi on 13 July. In September, he visited Mogadishu and Baidoa, meeting with members of the TNG, faction leaders and leaders of SRRC. He also undertook wide-ranging consultations with regional actors on Somalia in May and June. The consultations involved Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Yemen, the League of Arab States and IGAD. My Representative reported that there was broad agreement that the Somali situation required urgent attention and that the TNG could be the basis for completing the Djibouti peace process. There was also a widely shared view on the need for a mechanism that would facilitate a uniform approach and exchange of information among States and organizations with interest in the Somali peace process.

III. The humanitarian and development situation

39. Economic and social systems sustaining both lives and livelihoods in Somalia have been disrupted by more than a decade of conflict, as well as recurrent drought and flooding. In 2000, conditions across Somalia improved significantly due to positive environmental conditions and good harvests. However, the gains have been insufficient to break the seasonal cycle for poor and middle-income households.

40. In recent months, this vulnerability has been exacerbated by a number of factors: the partial failure of the *gu* rains in key food-producing regions of the south; the economic downturn due to the ban on livestock exports from the north; insecurity and violent conflict; and inflation due to injections of new Somali shilling notes. These factors are not expected to produce large-scale, life-threatening conditions over the next six months. However, with persistent malnutrition rates of between 15 to 20 per cent in vulnerable areas and child mortality rates as high as 224 per 1,000, aid agencies will have to continue to provide significant levels of humanitarian aid to prevent rapid livelihood deterioration and loss of life.

41. An estimated 750,000 people are in need of international assistance to cover food shortfall due to past harvest failure. Following the partial failure of the *gu* rains in southern Somalia, Bay, Bakool, Gedo and Hiran regions will face severely reduced harvest output of sorghum — the main staple crop. The full extent of food insecurity will only become evident in the October-December period. The heaviest burden will be borne by poor agro-pastoralists, who number nearly 400,000 individuals in the above-mentioned regions. Water catchments in these regions are already drying up, although pasture conditions are near the seasonal norm and household food stocks are considered adequate (but decreasing) following good harvests in 2000. Lack of water is likely to lead to above-normal stress migration and may increase the prevalence of disease.

42. Initial estimates indicate that food security in southern Somalia may deteriorate rapidly if commodity price levels increase; terms of trade for labour, milk and agricultural produce deteriorate; or transport routes, market access and kinship networks that are open for trade with surplus-producing areas (e.g., the Juba and Shabelle regions) become restricted. On its own, one season of limited harvest output will not lead to a serious crisis. In this regard, the success of the *deyr* season rains/harvest in late 2001 is the major risk factor to be monitored. In addition to immediate response measures, continued focus on the structural causes of vulnerability is required, including measures to address chronic health factors, ensuring access to basic social services and rebuilding poor household asset bases.

43. In northern regions, the livestock ban continues to reduce the ability of poor households to procure necessary food commodities. The most vulnerable groups include internally displaced persons and the urban poor (both of whom rely on trade-related employment), as well as poor pastoralist households (which receive fewer remittances and rely on urban employment as a coping mechanism). The effects of the livestock ban have been mitigated by favourable

environmental conditions in 2000 and the increased remittances from the Somali diaspora. Towards the end of the dry season in April, many pastoralist groups were forced into debt to procure water, while livestock in the coastal areas of Awdal died due to lack of pasture and water. The arrival of the *gu* rainy season alleviated these stresses. However, if the *deyr* season rains are not favourable in the north-east and north-west, domestic production may no longer be an adequate buffer against the shock of economic downturn and widespread food insecurity may emerge. Continuous monitoring is required.

44. To date, the annual cholera outbreak has generated less than one quarter of the number of cases recorded in 2000. If this trend continues, it will be the mildest outbreak since 1994. Since 1 January, a total of 1,742 cases and 120 deaths have been recorded, leaving an overall case fatality rate of 6.9 per cent. No significant changes in other key diseases, including kala azar, measles and malaria, were reported.

45. While environmental factors are undoubtedly important in determining the vulnerability of the Somali population, they disguise the underlining reasons for vulnerability of at least one quarter of the Somali population to threats of violence, displacement, disease and lack of food and water. It is therefore important to identify the key economic factors affecting livelihoods across the country. These are man-made factors that exist within the natural context of aridity and environmental uncertainty. They include asset depletion and destitution; lack of labour opportunities; limited benefits to the poor from economic expansion; lack of infrastructure and social services; lack of macroeconomic management; and market dependency and volatility.

46. In response to these conditions, United Nations agencies elaborated a multisectoral strategy to protect and rebuild livelihoods, prevent and respond to emergency situations and support the transition towards peace and reconciliation. To this end, United Nations agencies work in tandem with over 60 international NGOs and the Red Cross movement, which comprise, together with donors, the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB). The United Nations agencies have adopted a four-part humanitarian and development strategy to increase access to essential social services and build an enabling environment for peace and reconciliation. The pillars of this strategy are to gain access to vulnerable populations; secure a safe operating environment; provide assistance and protection; and improve coordination, security and support services. Implicit in the United Nations approach is respect for Somali partnership and impartiality in the provision of assistance.

47. Despite the best efforts of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors, public access to aid services is limited by the concentration of projects in urban areas, dwindling agency presence in southern regions and a continually dwindling funding base. The limited access to safe water (some 28 per cent of the population) and primary school education (enrolment of 13.8 per cent of children) are indications of the critically low access to basic social services by the majority of the population. Without further assistance, it will be impossible to extend the United Nations presence in Somalia and provide emergency assistance to populations in need.

48. Accomplishing this strategy is possible only if adequate financial and material resources are available. To support its humanitarian, recovery and development activities, United Nations agencies issued the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2001. According to the SACB donor report for 2000, total international donor assistance to Somalia in the year 2000 was US$ 115.5 million. Emergency assistance accounted for 45 per cent, and development assistance 55 per cent, of overall contributions. The report estimated that humanitarian and development efforts in the "Somaliland" and "Puntland" areas amounted to 42 per cent of contributions and the "South" 31 per cent, while the remaining 27 per cent was spent on programmes implemented on a country-wide basis. In the current year, $20.7 million (16 per cent) of the $129 million requested for the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2001 has been provided by Member States. Programmes linked to the TNG have received virtually no assistance from international donors, including United Nations agencies, although the TNG itself has received some support from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries.

IV. Security

49. The security situation in Somalia remains tenuous. On 27 March, militiamen loyal to one of the faction leaders in Mogadishu, Musse Sudi "Yallahow", attacked the compound in north Mogadishu of the international non-governmental organization Médecins

sans frontières Spain (MSF-Spain). Indiscriminate shooting into the MSF-Spain compound continued for a period of about two hours until the defenders of the compound were overpowered. Six international United Nations staff members and three MSF-Spain colleagues, with whom they had been meeting, were abducted. The compound, including valuable health-care equipment belonging to MSF-Spain, was looted. All international staff were eventually released unharmed, but several fatalities were recorded among Somali guards and Sudi's militia.

50. A peace meeting between some Hawiye leaders and Hussein Aidid at the Mogadishu seaport on 11 May deteriorated into fighting between his militia and those of a businessman ally of the TNG, who owned a warehouse opposite the seaport. The fighting resulted in the death of a reported 26 persons and the wounding of about 50. The speedy intervention of elders helped to minimize the casualties. On 28 June, Mr. Aidid's militia clashed with the TNG police, who had been involved in an operation to purge the city of bandits. Two further clashes occurred in July. In north Mogadishu, a dispute among Abgal sub-clans caused several deaths before elders resolved the issue, while in the south a number of people died when militiamen attempted to loot a food aid convoy provided by Saudi Arabia. Because of the continued security problem, the seaport and airport in Mogadishu remain closed. There have been sporadic clashes between faction militias and the TNG police, but since July these have been relatively minor.

51. On 25 July, General "Morgan" and his militiamen moved south from Bay and Bakool with the intention of capturing Kismayo. The planned offensive resulted in many deaths as the militia encountered those of the Lower Juba Alliance in Buale and Jilib, among other places. Fighting continued throughout August. The Lower Juba Alliance regained control of Buale from "Morgan's" forces, who are reported to have positions around Afnadow and Dinsoor.

52. The constitutional crisis in "Puntland", as mentioned earlier, has broken a decade of relative peace in the area. On 5 and 6 August, fighting between Colonel Yusuf's forces and those of the Chairman of the Supreme Court resulted in the relocation of United Nations humanitarian staff from Bossaso to Hargeisa. Although staff were soon allowed to return, tensions remain high. On 23 August, the relative stability of "Somalilard" was affected by the arrests of four Sultans at a gathering of traditional leaders. There were clashes between Government forces and Sultan militias, resulting in five deaths and a brief suspension of United Nations activities.

53. Piracy and forcible detention of sailors on trawlers fishing illegally in Somali territorial waters has continued. Two fishing vessels, said to be Russian-owned, were detained by a militia leader in the Kismayo port on 10 March. On 2 August, a fishing boat sailing under the Italian flag with a Kenyan crew was seized with a full catch and taken to the northern port of Eyl.

54. On 28 July, President Daniel Arap Moi ordered a ban on all border trade between Kenya and Somalia and placed an embargo on commercial flights between the two countries. The President's press service stated that the move was aimed at curbing the flow of small arms into Kenya from Somalia. President Moi had imposed a similar ban in August 1999.

55. During August and September there were two security assessment missions to Mogadishu. These assessments concluded that the situation had improved, relative to the time of the hostage-taking incident in March, somewhat and the presence of weapons in the streets had been reduced. There was also an increased police presence and a reduction in banditry. This marginal improvement allowed United Nations international staff to visit the city for a very limited period of time.

56. On 24 September, a Somali-based organization, Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya, was included in the United States list of 27 organizations suspected to have terrorist links. The same day, the United Nations temporarily evacuated its international staff from Somalia due to the withdrawal of war-risk insurance coverage by the insurance company covering United Nations flights in and out of the country. United Nations international staff resumed their functions inside Somalia on 29 September.

V. Observations

57. The conclusion of the Djibouti peace process in Arta was an important milestone in the search for peace and reconciliation in Somalia. I share the views of OAU, IGAD and EU that the completion of the Arta process remains the most viable option for lasting peace in Somalia.

58. The international community will wish to bear in mind that there has been no central administration of any description in Somalia for the past 10 years. The TNG inherited none of the formal institutions of a modern State on the basis of which a national authority could be said to have control over a territory. Any Government in Somalia, no matter who forms it, would face similar problems. In this regard, I welcome the fact that Ahmed Abdi Hashi presented his credentials as the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations on 12 September.

59. Both the TNG and SRRC claim to be national, multi-clan alliances. Both have stated that they wish to pursue national reconciliation. Both include personalities who were prominent in the previous Siad Barre regime. Neither seems to disagree on any major political issue, including such potentially divisive issues as the role of religion in the State or relationships between central and local administrations. Clearly, the differences ought not to be irreconcilable.

60. In recent weeks, the authority of the "Presidents" of both "Somaliland" and "Puntland", in particular the latter, has been challenged. This has led to uncertainty regarding the political stability of those regions.

61. While the search for a national solution continues, much more attention could be paid to local political settlements. Nevertheless, recent events have shown that disputes which often appear to be purely local cannot be solved by local actors alone at the local level. Thus, the process of rebuilding national institutions should go forward alongside strong and impartial efforts at local reconciliation. Ongoing United Nations programmes to enhance local capacities should be strengthened as a parallel means to advance reconciliation at the local and national levels.

62. I welcome the commitment of the TNG and of other Somali leaders to engage in a dialogue without preconditions. I reiterate my call on Somali leaders to put aside their narrow interests and work together for the interest of the people of Somalia at large.

63. As I have stated in my previous reports, the Somali parties should dedicate themselves entirely to the effort to achieve the ultimate objective: the return of their country to peace, stability and overall normalcy. Unless they make a genuine political effort, the present plight of Somalia will continue. On the other hand, the external actors, including OAU, IGAD, the United Nations and its Member States, will need to help in sustaining that effort.

64. Such a dialogue could be facilitated by a suitable framework for negotiation. It would be important for IGAD to put in place the mechanism agreed upon at the Khartoum summit in November 2000. The National Commission for Reconciliation and Property Settlement foreseen in the TNC could be one option for promoting national reconciliation in Somalia.

65. Until recently, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs had organized periodic ambassadorial meetings on Somalia in New York. Also, a Standing Committee on Somalia used to meet in Addis Ababa. Those meetings were discontinued following the Arta conference. In the present circumstances, a mechanism for the exchange of information and the coordination of efforts among external actors is still needed. The mechanism could bring together interested countries and organizations in an effort to support the search for lasting peace in Somalia.

66. I intend to consult all concerned on the feasibility and usefulness of setting up a Committee of Friends of Somalia to focus on ways and means of drawing attention to Somalia's needs in the area of national reconciliation as well as to help mobilize funds for rehabilitation and development. The membership of such a Committee should include relevant IGAD countries and members of the IGAD Partners Forum and could be jointly chaired by my Representative and a representative of an IGAD member State.

67. I continue to be concerned about the human rights situation in Somalia. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights visited Somalia from 28 August to 7 September 2001 and his report to the Commission is under preparation.

68. I am also concerned that, despite the best efforts of United Nations and other humanitarian and development agencies, large sections of the Somali population continue to suffer from the internal conflict and its consequences with little hope of improvement in their living conditions. Moreover, the unfavourable security conditions in the country continue to prevent the United Nations and its humanitarian and development partners from providing assistance to those in need on a continuous and unimpeded basis. The United Nations will continue to make every effort to provide humanitarian and development assistance in Somalia. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my

appeal to potential donors to respond generously to the consolidated appeals process and contribute to ongoing and future development programmes in Somalia.

69. The political, humanitarian and development challenges faced by Somalia are of such magnitude that the peace-building process is likely to take a long time to complete. A key role for the international community at present is to support a Somali peace process, the establishment of the rule of law and the emergence of impartial national political and judicial institutions in Somalia. Somalia will need help to rebuild its administrative and physical infrastructure. It is useful to note that efforts in these fields are under way, albeit limited to certain areas. The United Nations stands ready to expand its support in such areas as political and security conditions permit.

70. Pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council on 11 January 2001, I asked the Secretariat to undertake the necessary consultations with a view to preparing a proposal for a peace-building office for Somalia. The consultations indicated some confusion among Somali leaders as to what such an office might involve. The TNG and Somali civil society supported the idea in general. However, some of those opposed to the TNG had the impression that such an office would work solely with, and in support of, the TNG.

71. There is clearly a need for the United Nations to carry out a thorough review of the security situation in Somalia. Such an assessment could only be undertaken with the consent and cooperation of the TNG and other political and faction leaders.

72. As the Security Council is aware, a security assessment of Mogadishu undertaken in late February 2001 concluded that the security situation did not make it possible to deploy a peace-building office in the country. Since then, the Secretariat has also reported to the Council in informal consultations that the security situation in Somalia has not improved and remains, by and large, the same today. Moreover, the seaport and airport remain closed and there is no single authority in the country that can assure security and unimpeded access to the United Nations even in Mogadishu.

73. In the circumstances, it is not possible at present for me to recommend the deployment of a post-conflict peace-building mission in Somalia. I will continue to monitor the situation in the country closely. When it improves enough to allow for the establishment of such a mission, I will submit a detailed proposal to the Security Council.

74. I would like to thank my Representative and the staff of UNPOS for their valuable role in monitoring and reporting on the situation in Somalia, and propose that the mandate of UNPOS be renewed for another two years (2002-2003). I commend United Nations humanitarian and development agencies for continuing to carry out their much needed — indeed essential — activities in the country.